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### Is the present tongues movement of God?

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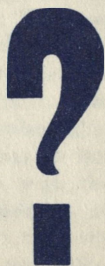
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Answered by  
**R. A. TORREY**

**Q. Is the present "Tongues Movement of God?"**

A. It is not. This is clear from the following facts: First—The present "Tongues Movement" makes speaking with tongues the one and only decisive evidence that one has the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The "Tongues" people constantly declare that if one has not spoken with tongues he has not as yet received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. This constant declaration of the "Tongues" people contradicts the very explicit and plain teaching of the Bible. The Word of God teaches in words that cannot be mistaken by anyone who sincerely desires to know the mind of God as revealed in the Word, and who is not simply trying to maintain a theory, that while there is but one baptism with the Spirit, and but one Holy Spirit, that there are many different ways in which this baptism manifests itself. You will see this for yourself if you will carefully read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. Further on in this same chapter the Spirit of God speaking through the Apostle Paul asks those whom he declares to have been "baptized in the Spirit" (v. 13) "Do all speak with tongues?" (v. 30). The plain implication of which is that all did not speak with tongues. So this chapter states in the most unmistakable terms that one may have been baptized with the Holy Spirit and yet not speak with tongues. Therefore, it is clear as day that



the position of the "Tongues" people that anyone who has not spoken with tongues has not been baptized with the Holy Spirit contradicts the plain teaching of God's Word.

Second—The practical effect of the teaching of the "Tongues Movement" is to make speaking with tongues the most important of all manifestations of the Spirit's presence and power. This again is contrary to the plain teaching of the Word of God. The Word of God declares in most unmistakable terms that speaking with tongues is one of the least important of the manifestations of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. In the list given in the twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians, "Kinds of tongues," verse 10, is put next to the bottom of the list of the gifts bestowed by the Spirit on believers. Again in verses 29, 30 of the same chapter speaking with tongues is given the same place, next to the bottom of the list. In the list given in Ephesians of gifts bestowed by the ascended Christ through his Holy Spirit upon the Church there is no mention whatever of speaking with tongues (Eph. 4:7-12). Furthermore, in 1 Corinthians 14:5 we are distinctly told that he that prophesieth is greater than the one that speaks with tongues, and in verse 19 the Apostle Paul himself declares that he had rather speak five words with his understanding than he might teach others than 10,000 words in a tongue (see especially R. V.).

Third—The "Tongues Movement" leads its followers to seek for speaking with tongues more than any other gift, while the Bible plainly teaches us that we ought rather to seek some other gift than this. In 1 Corinthians 12:31 the Bible says, "Covet earnestly (or desire earnestly) the best gifts." The words here used if translated literally would be "the greater gifts" (see R. V.), and the context clearly shows that what is meant by the "greater gifts" is some other gift than speaking with tongues. The fourteenth chapter and the first verse says, "Desire earnestly spiritual gifts *but rather that ye may prophesy*," then in the following verses Paul tells us why we should rather choose to prophesy than to speak with tongues. So this seeking for and *waiting for tongues* which is such a prominent feature in "the Tongues Movement" is utterly unscriptural, it is in direct opposition to the plain teaching of God's Word.

Fourth—The leaders of the "Tongues Movement" persistently disobey the plain teaching of God's Word in the matter of speaking with tongues in public assemblies. The Word of God plainly teaches in 1 Corinthians 14 that speaking with tongues should be done in private rather than in public. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:19, "Howbeit *in the church* (i. e., in the public assembly) I had rather speak five words with my understanding than I might in-



struct others also than 10,000 words in a tongue (R. V.).” He goes on to say that when men do speak with tongues in the public assembly *no more than two or at the most three* should speak at any one gathering, and that where two or at the most three do speak they should only speak *in turn* and not two or more at the same time (1 Cor. 14:27), and he still further says that *unless there is someone to interpret what is said then no one should speak in tongues in the public assembly*, that whenever there is not an interpreter present the one who would speak in tongues should keep silent and speak to himself and to God (vs. 27, 28). Now in the gatherings of the “Tongues” people, oftentimes many speak in tongues in a single gathering; oftentimes several speak at the same time, and they constantly speak even when there is no one present to interpret. In these matters they disobey God in the most unmistakable way and certainly a movement that so persistently disobeys what God plainly commands in His Word is not of God.

Fifth—The “Tongues Movement” has been accompanied by the most grievous disorders and the grossest immoralities. God plainly declares in His Word in 1 Corinthians 14:33 that “God is not a God of confusion” (the word here translated “confusion” means “a state of disorder,” “disturbance,” “confusion”). At one of the

most prominent of the gatherings of the “Tongues” people recently held in this city (Los Angeles) there has been the most indescribable disorder, disturbance and confusion. Men and women in large numbers have lain for hours side by side on the ground or on the platform in the most unseemly and immodest way, in a state of hypnotic unconsciousness, far into the night, subject to shameful disgrace in the eyes of the public. The leader in these meetings, a woman of wide renown, threw these unfortunate men and women into this condition by methods that were plainly hypnotic and precisely the same employed by the heathen in Africa and by hypnotic adventurers in spiritualistic and other gatherings in this country. A person desiring to be healed, or to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, would be placed in a chair before the audience with their back turned to the audience, and then a man would grab them by the head, putting one hand on the top of the head and another on the back of the head violently, and then this woman would rub down the bodies, sometimes rubbing down the bodies of men in the most immodest way. Later when they arose from the chair, their arms would be stuck up from below and they would be told to keep their arms up, and they would hold them up until they fell unconscious. In one definite case of which I know one boy held up his arms for at least an hour



before he fell under what they call "the power." It hardly needs to be said that this does not bear the slightest resemblance to anything in the New Testament, but does bear the most striking resemblance to what is done by the heathen in Africa, the "fakirs" in India, and by hypnotic adventurers in this country. The whole thing is repulsive to anyone who really knows the teachings of the Bible and what the real operations of the Holy Spirit are. We are taught in 2 Timothy 1:6, that the Holy Spirit is not a Spirit of fear but of power and love and of a sound mind. The spirit who manifests himself in meetings of the tongues people is anything but a spirit of a sound mind. But the confusion, as dishonoring as it is to the Word of God and as plainly as it is rebuked by the Word of God, is not the worst thing in the "Tongues Movement." There has been, as said above, gross immorality connected with it. The originator in point of time of the modern "Tongues Movement" was arrested for grossest immorality, a form of immorality for which we have no name in our English language though it is described in the first chapter of Romans. Another of the most prominent, perhaps the most prominent, leader in the State of Ohio, was convicted of crime with a young woman, though he himself was a married man. In a number of instances men and women leaders in the movement have been proven

guilty of the vilest relations to one another. In many instances the movement has seethed with immorality of the grossest character. This is not to say for a moment that there are no clean-minded and well-meaning men and women in the Movement, but the Movement as a whole has apparently developed more immorality than any other modern movement except spiritism, to which it is so closely allied in many ways. Two of the leaders of the Movement went from this country to India and for a while had a following among some of the most prominent Christian workers there, but some of those who went into it were so shocked by the indecencies that developed in connection with it that they came out.

5. In numerous instances as the "Tongues Movement" developed it became evident that it was demoniacal. There seemed to be evidence that those claiming to speak with tongues really did speak with tongues other than those which they understood, but what they said was vile and bad, showing that the spirit that moved them was not the Holy Spirit but a demon. There were manifestations in Macao, China, precisely the same as those described by "the Society for Psychical Research" as occurring in spiritualistic gatherings. Some that have spoken with tongues have afterwards discovered that they were demon-possessed instead of being baptized with the Holy

Spirit. There have been remarkable and startling and appalling developments along this line in Germany. The truth is that many people are so anxious to be governed by some supernatural spirit that they are not careful to distinguish as to whether this supernatural being that controls them is the Holy Spirit or a demon, and the "Tongues Movement" has had most startling developments along this line.

6. The "Tongues Movement" in all its essential features is nothing modern. The same thing developed between 1830 and 1840 in the unfortunate Irvingite Movement in England. There was a most marvelous manifestation of "speaking with tongues" in that movement that led away for a time some clear-minded men and women who afterwards had unmistakable evidence that the spirit who controlled the speakers was not the Holy Spirit at all but an evil spirit. Speaking with tongues has been practiced among the Mormons for many years. Throughout its history in Mormon gatherings in Utah oftentimes men and women have claimed to speak with tongues.

To sum it all up, the "Tongues Movement" is a movement upon which God has set the stamp of His disapproval in a most unmistakable way in His Word, and also in what He has permitted to develop in connection with it. It is a movement that every one who believes and obeys the Word

of God should leave severely alone except to expose, as there may be occasion, the gross errors and evils connected with it. We do not deny the possibility of God's giving a man in our day the gift of tongues. If God sees fit to do it, He can do it and will do it, but the "Gift of Tongues" evidently was so abused in the early church in lines very similar to the present abuse in the "Tongues Movement" that it was necessary even in Paul's time to warn people about the errors connected with the gift of tongues, and God, in His wisdom and love for a time withdrew this gift from the Church and there is no good reason for supposing that He has restored it at the present time, and certainly the so-called "Tongues Movement" is not of God.





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